

FARMERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS FARMER PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS FOR COLLECTIVE GROWTH

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture remains the primary livelihood source for most of India's population, with small and marginal farmers playing a crucial role in the sector. However, these farmers face significant challenges, including limited access to modern technology, quality inputs, and organized markets. Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) serve as a key solution by collectivizing farmers and enhancing their market participation. The study aims to evaluate the attitude of FPO members in Kolar district of Karnataka through a standardized attitude scale. Sample constituted 120 farmers across four FPOs (30 per FPO). Findings reveal that 40 per cent of members held a favourable attitude towards their FPOs, while 30.83 per cent exhibited a more favourable stance. A Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA test identified a statistically significant difference in attitudes among FPO members, with FPO 3 ranking highest (80.83). Additionally, factors such as innovativeness, extension contact, risk orientation, and scientific orientation were found to significantly shape members' attitude. These insights underscore the need for targeted interventions, including enhanced training, education, and support, to strengthen FPOs and maximize benefits for India's small and marginal farmers.

Keywords: attitude, farmer producer organization, market

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture and its allied sectors are the backbone of livelihoods in India, with nearly 70 per cent of rural households primarily dependent on farming. Notably, 82 per cent of Indian farmers are small and marginal, playing a vital role in ensuring national food security and driving sustainable agricultural growth. Despite their importance, these farmers often face significant barriers to accessing technological advancements, quality inputs, and modern market linkages. Low literacy levels and limited awareness of government schemes further hinder their ability to benefit from available support systems, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions (Anonymous, 2023).

Although Indian farmers are skilled in production, selling their produce at fair prices remains a challenge due to limited rural markets and inadequate marketing knowledge. One of the most promising solutions has been the collectivization of producers into Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). This model empowers small and marginal farmers by uniting them into collective enterprises that enhance their bargaining power, access to markets, and profitability (Anonymous, 2013).

FPOs offer holistic support including improved

production technologies, quality inputs, technical guidance, and streamlined marketing. Recognizing their significance, the Government of India declared 2014 the "Year of FPO". As of 2022, India has around 7,059 registered FPOs, including 578 in Karnataka, supported by institutions such as SFAC and NABARD (Anonymous, 2022). These organizations are crucial in enhancing agricultural resilience and improving farmers' livelihoods.

While existing studies have largely examined the organizational and institutional aspects of FPOs, there is limited research on how they influence members' attitudes. The present study seeks to address this gap by analyzing how membership in FPOs shapes and changes farmers' attitudes. The findings of the study could be used as insights by the policymakers and executors in enhancing the functioning of FPOs across other regions of India.

OBJECTIVE

To study the attitude of members towards FPOs

METHODOLOGY

Keeping the study in view, an ex-post facto research design was adopted. This design was considered appropriate as the phenomenon under investigation had already occurred,

and the researcher had no control over the variables. The study was conducted in Kolar and Srinivaspura taluks of Kolar district, Karnataka, focusing on Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). The sampling frame comprised registered farmer members of these FPOs. From each taluk, two FPOs were purposively selected, and 30 farmer members were randomly chosen from each FPO, giving a total sample size of 120 respondents. These FPOs had been operational for three to five years.

To evaluate members' attitudes toward their respective FPOs, the study employed the Dechamma *et al.* (2020) attitude scale, which comprises 22 statements designed to assess perceptions of organizational effectiveness. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA) – 5 points, Agree (A) – 4 points, Undecided (UD)

– 3 points, Disagree (DA) – 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SDA) – 1 point. Scores for negative statements were assigned in reverse order. Each respondent's total attitude score was calculated by summing the weighted responses, resulting in a possible range of 22 to 110 points. Based on mean and standard deviation measures, respondents were categorized into three groups: less favourable, favourable, and more favourable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statement wise attitude of FPOs Members

Table 1 presents the statement-wise attitudes of Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) members across four FPOs.

Table 1: Statement-wise attitude of FPO members towards their organization

Sr. No.	Statements	FPO 1 (n ₁ =30)		FPO 2 (n ₂ =30)		FPO 3 (n ₃ =30)		FPO 4 (n ₄ =30)		Overall (n=120)	
		MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank
1	FPOs help in increasing confidence among farmers	4.00	X	4.07	X	4.17	XI	4.33	I	4.14	VI
2	FPOs provide needful information on improved agricultural practices	3.50	XX	3.70	XX	3.93	XVIII	3.53	XVIII	3.67	XIX
3	FPOs are long- term solution to the problems of price inflation	3.40	XXI	3.63	XXII	3.63	XXII	3.47	XIX	3.53	XXI
4	FPOs are boon for farmers	3.53	XIX	3.97	XII	4.13	XII	3.67	XVI	3.83	XVI
5	FPOs mismanage the local resources (N)	4.43	II	4.27	V	4.03	XV	3.80	XIII	4.13	VII
6	Much is talked about FPOs, but little work is done (N)	4.50	I	3.90	XIV	3.90	XIX	4.07	VI	4.09	IX
7	Organizing farmers into groups is not waste of money	3.87	XIV	4.57	I	4.07	XIV	4.23	III	4.18	IV
8	FPOs have created more problems for members than solving them (N)	3.97	XI	4.33	III	4.57	I	3.57	XVII	4.11	VIII
9	Attending FPOs work is time consuming for the members (N)	4.07	VIII	4.17	VII	4.50	II	3.87	XII	4.15	V
10	Activities of FPOs are as per members needs	4.37	III	4.53	II	4.43	IV	4.27	II	4.40	I
11	FPOs are a prospective system to empower farmers	4.30	IV	4.10	IX	4.37	VI	4.00	VIII	4.19	III
12	FPOs are potential enough to bring about agricultural development	3.83	XV	3.83	XVI	4.20	X	3.97	IX	3.96	XV
13	FPOs are farmers friendly approach to sale farm products	3.80	XVI	3.67	XXI	3.97	XVII	3.13	XXI	3.64	XX
14	FPOs induces Cosmopolitaness of its members	3.77	XVII	3.77	XVIII	3.83	XXI	3.73	XIV	3.78	XVIII

Sr. No.	Statements	FPO 1 (n ₁ =30)		FPO 2 (n ₂ =30)		FPO 3 (n ₃ =30)		FPO 4 (n ₄ =30)		Overall (n=120)	
		MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank	MAS	Rank
15	FPOs inculcate the decision-making ability among their members	4.13	VI	4.03	XI	4.40	V	3.70	XV	4.07	XI
16	FPOs work on the principle of democracy	3.93	XII	3.87	XV	4.23	IX	4.03	VII	4.02	XIV
17	FPOs provide need-based consultancy services to the members	3.90	XIII	4.23	VI	4.30	VIII	3.90	XI	4.08	X
18	FPOs are not rigid as co-operatives	4.23	V	4.30	IV	4.47	III	4.17	IV	4.29	II
19	Administration / management of FPOs involve too much of autocracy (N)	4.10	VII	3.93	XIII	4.10	XIII	4.10	V	4.06	XII
20	FPOs increase overhead charges (N)	4.03	IX	4.13	VIII	4.00	XVI	3.93	X	4.03	XIII
21	Benefits from government/ other institutions could be availed by FPOs members	3.70	XVIII	3.80	XVII	4.33	VII	3.30	XX	3.78	XVII
22	Peer pressure affects the functioning of FPO (N)	3.20	XXII	3.73	XIX	3.87	XX	3.03	XXII	3.46	XXII

MAS = Mean Attitude Score; (N) = Negative statement

For FPO 1, the statement “*Much is talked about FPOs, but little work is done*” ranked first (Mean Attitude Score, MAS = 4.50). Members disagreed with this, affirming that FPOs actively utilize resources and prioritize action over rhetoric. This was followed by “*FPOs mismanage local resources*” (Rank II) and “*Activities of FPOs are as per members’ needs*” (Rank III), with members rejecting the mismanagement claim, citing responsible resource use and collective decision-making.

For FPO 2, “*Organizing farmers into groups is not a waste of money*” ranked first (MAS = 4.57), followed by “*Activities of FPOs are as per members’ needs*” (Rank II) and “*FPOs have created more problems than solutions*” (Rank III). Members affirmed that collective organization enhanced productivity, bargaining power, and market access. They also noted that FPOs effectively addressed challenges, such as subsidized input provision and regular demonstrations, leading them to disagree with the third statement.

For FPO 3, “*FPOs have created more problems than solutions*” ranked first (MAS = 4.57), though members disagreed, recognizing benefits such as improved market access through procurement centers (mandis), better bargaining power, technical support, income growth via value addition, and reduced intermediary commissions. “*Attending FPO work is time-consuming*” ranked second,

yet members felt that advantages enhanced farming practices, resource access, and income growth outweighed the time commitment. The third-ranked statement was “*FPOs are not as rigid as cooperatives.*”

For FPO 4, “*FPOs help increase farmers’ confidence*” ranked first (MAS = 4.33), followed by “*Activities of FPOs are as per members’ needs*” (Rank II) and “*Organizing farmers into groups is not a waste of money*” (Rank III). Members gained confidence through collective marketing, wider market access, and better pricing, reinforcing their belief in the organizational benefits.

Across all FPOs combined, “*Activities of FPOs are as per members’ needs*” ranked first (MAS = 4.40), followed by “*FPOs are not as rigid as cooperatives*” (Rank II) and “*FPOs are a prospective system to empower farmers*” (Rank III). The results are in line with the study conducted by Gopala (2015); Dechamma *et al.* (2022); Navya *et al.* (2025); Saikia *et al.* (2024); Machapathri *et al.* (2024); Harikrishna *et al.* (2021); Patel *et al.* (2023); Yeragorla *et al.* (2023).

Overall attitude of FPO members towards their organization

Table 2 and Figure 1 illustrate the overall attitude of members across four Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).

Table 2: Overall attitude of members of each FPO towards their organization

Sr. No.	Attitude	Score	FPO 1 (n ₁ =30)		FPO 2 (n ₂ =30)		FPO 3 (n ₃ =30)		FPO 4 (n ₄ =30)		Overall (n=120)	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Less Favourable	<84.48	10	33.33	07	23.34	06	20.00	12	40.00	35	29.17
2	Favourable	84.48 - 90.69	12	40.00	13	43.33	10	33.33	13	43.33	48	40.00
3	More Favourable	>90.69	08	26.67	10	33.33	14	46.67	05	16.67	37	30.83

A significant percentage of members in FPO 1 (40.00%), FPO 2 (43.33%), and FPO 4 (43.33%) exhibited a favourable attitude toward their organization. Meanwhile, FPO 3 recorded the highest percentage (46.67%) of members with the most favourable attitude. Overall, 40.00% of members had a favourable attitude, followed by 30.83% with a more favourable outlook, and 29.17% with a less favourable attitude. The results are in conformity with the results obtained by Ramakant *et al.* (2012), Dechamma *et al.* (2022) and Prajapati *et al.* (2023)

programs and workshops that provided guidance on modern farming techniques, pest and disease management, and market intelligence.

- Affordable input supply, enabling members to reduce cultivation costs.
- Market facilitation, wherein FPOs negotiated pricing with buyers and intermediaries and engaged in value addition activities to enhance profitability.

The reasons or factors that were identified for the members' positive perception towards regular training

These efforts collectively strengthened members' confidence in their organizations, fostering greater engagement and long-term benefits.

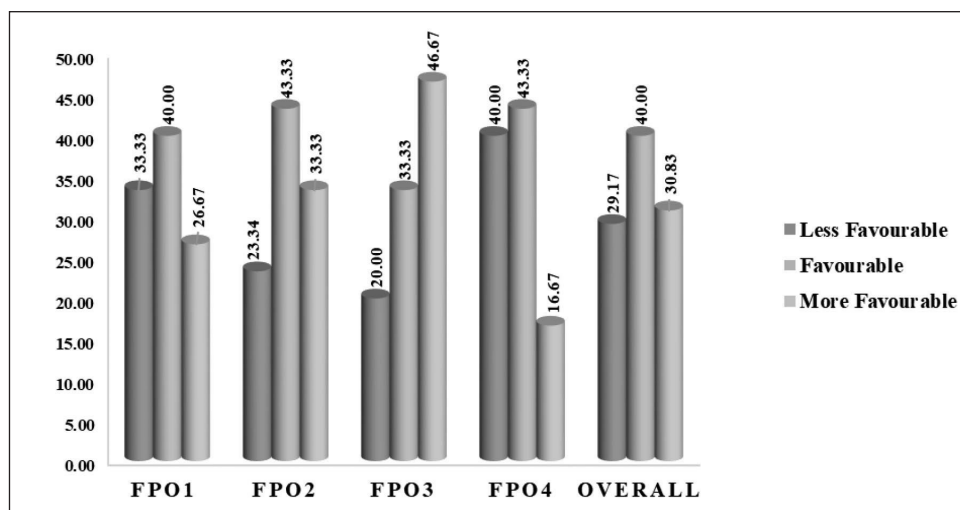


Fig 1: Overall attitude of members of each FPO towards their organization

Comparison between attitudes of the members of different FPOs using Kruskal-Wallis one way ANOVA

Table 3: Comparison of members attitude on FPOs using Kruskal-Wallis test

(n=120)

Sr. No.	FPOs	Mean score	Mean Rank	Rank	Chi-square Value
1	FPO 1 (n ₁ =30)	86.57	55.35	III	20.29**
2	FPO 2 (n ₂ =30)	88.53	64.28	II	
3	FPO 3 (n ₃ =30)	91.43	80.83	I	
4	FPO 4 (n ₄ =30)	83.80	41.53	IV	

** Significant at 1 % level

To evaluate the differences in attitudes among members of various FPOs, a Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results, presented in Table 3, revealed a statistically significant positive difference, likely attributed to the distinct benefits offered by each FPO. The analysis also highlighted variations in mean ranks, with FPO 3 achieving the highest mean rank (80.83), followed by FPO 2 (64.28), FPO 1 (55.35), and FPO 4 (41.53). The differences between FPO 3 and the other FPOs, can be attributed to variations in the extent to which these organizations have engaged in value-added activities or negotiated more favourable market conditions. The results are in line with the study conducted by Gopala (2015) and Dechamma *et al.* (2022).

Relationship between profile characteristics and attitude of FPO members

Table 4: Relationship between profile characteristics and attitude of FPO members (n=120)

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	Correlation co-efficient 'r'
X ₁	Age	0.013 NS
X ₂	Family size	-0.031 NS
X ₃	Farming experience	0.036 NS
X ₄	Land holding	0.226*
X ₅	Education	0.180*
X ₆	Innovativeness	0.253**
X ₇	Extension contact	0.353**
X ₈	Economic motivation	0.229*
X ₉	Achievement motivation	0.215*
X ₁₀	Management orientation	0.241**
X ₁₁	Risk orientation	0.393**
X ₁₂	Deferred gratification	0.072 NS
X ₁₃	Scientific orientation	0.447**
X ₁₄	Decision making ability	0.060 NS

NS = Non-Significant

*Significant at 5 % level

**Significant at 1 % level

The analysis of profile characteristics and their influence on FPO members' attitudes revealed significant correlations across various factors (Refer to Table 4). Five key variables i.e., innovativeness, extension contact, management orientation, risk orientation, and scientific orientation, showed a strong positive relationship with members' attitudes at the 1 per cent significance level. Additionally, land holding, education, economic motivation, and achievement motivation demonstrated significant associations at the 5 per cent level. In contrast, age, family size, farming experience, deferred gratification, and decision-making ability did not exhibit any notable correlation with members' attitudes toward FPOs. Similar findings were also reported by Ramakant *et al.*

(2012), Gopala (2015) and Dechamma *et al.* (2022).

The major reasons that were identified for the significant relation of variables with the attitude are as follows:

- **Land Holding:** Larger landowners had more positive attitude towards FPOs, as they can invest more in farming and leverage the collective benefits offered by FPOs, such as bulk input purchasing and market access.
- **Education:** Higher education levels enabled the farmers to better understand the benefits of FPO activities, leading to a more favourable attitude.
- **Innovativeness:** Some farmers who are more innovative and open to adopting new farming techniques viewed FPOs as platforms for enhancing productivity and improving farming practices, contributing to a positive attitude towards FPOs.
- **Extension Contact:** Regular interaction with agricultural professionals, including KVK and UAS Bangalore scientists provided the farmers knowledge and expertise, which in turn strengthens their confidence in FPOs as sources of support, strengthening members' attitudes.
- **Economic Motivation:** The potential for increased income, higher yields, and economic well-being motivated the farmers to engage frequently with FPOs, fostering in a favourable attitude.
- **Achievement Motivation:** Members with strong success goals view FPOs as a pathway to farming excellence. They valued the training, resources, and networking opportunities provided by the FPOs, leading to a favorable attitude.
- **Management Orientation:** Training, field visits, and demonstrations from experts enhances the management skills among the farmers, shaping a positive perception towards FPOs.
- **Risk Orientation:** Farmers who were open to take calculated risks valued FPOs for their ability to share risks collectively, which fosters confidence and positive attitude among the farmers.
- **Scientific Orientation:** Some of the farmers who were inclined towards modern farming techniques embrace FPOs as gateways to advancements and innovations, reinforcing their positive outlook.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that 40% of respondents hold a favourable attitude toward their organizations, reflecting the growing acceptance of the FPO concept among Indian

farmers. Organized farmers wield greater bargaining power compared to their unorganized counterparts, enabling them to negotiate more effectively with influential market participants. This strengthened position helps ensure that a larger share of earnings reaches the farmers directly, rather than intermediaries and purchasers. Therefore, promoting and supporting member-owned producer organizations is essential for empowering farmers and enhancing their financial stability, outcomes and market influence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study also showed that FPOs significantly impacted their members' economic and social status. By expanding the establishment of FPOs to other regions of the country, similar benefits can be extended to small and marginal farmers who are currently facing challenges in sustaining their income levels.

FPOs may collaborate with a variety of businesses, including Reliance, Safal, Farmer Mandi, and pesticide manufacturers. These Partnerships can greatly benefit FPOs and their members with enhanced market access, improved product quality, reduced intermediary risks, and increasing income opportunities.

Majority of the membership under FPOs was found to be occupied by the middle-aged farmers. Therefore, government should assist the organizations to encourage young people in rural areas to take part in group and community development activities in order to keep the next generation of farmers in agriculture.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors confirm that they have no conflict of interest.

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